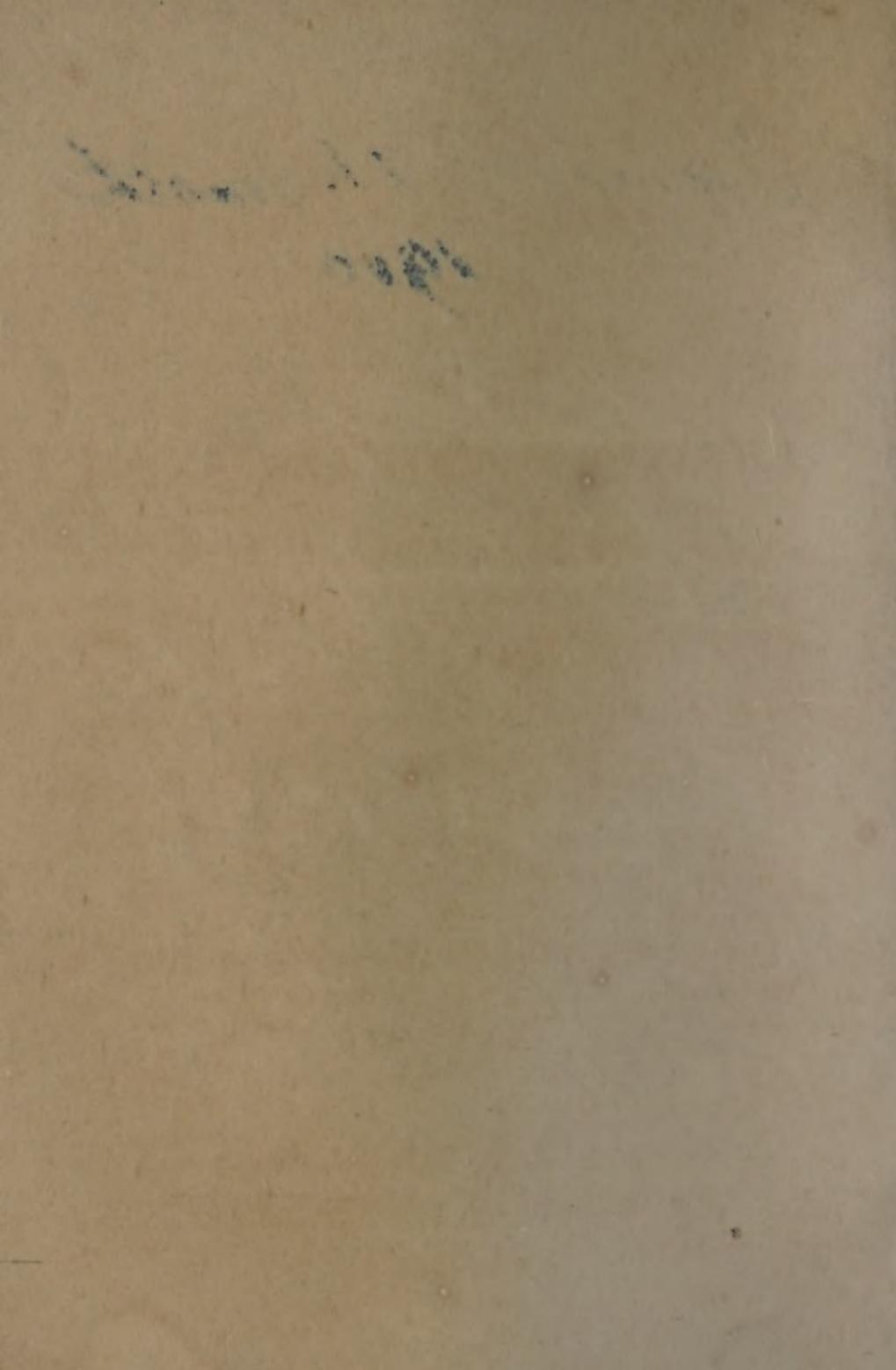




Elizabeth H. Smith
1900



LADIES' HAND-BOOK

OF

MILLINERY AND DRESSMAKING,

WITH

PLAIN INSTRUCTIONS FOR MAKING THE MOST USEFUL
ARTICLES OF DRESS AND ATTIRE.

WITH ADDITIONS BY AN AMERICAN LADY.

NEW YORK:
J. S. REDFIELD, CLINTON HALL.

MDCCCXLIV.

ENTERED, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1843,
BY J. S. REDFIELD,
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States,
for the Southern District of New York.

STEREOTYPED BY REDFIELD AND SAVAGE,
13 CHAMBERS STREET, N. Y.

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INTRODUCTION.

IN a community like that in which we live, where respectability of appearance is essentially important to our prospects in life, and where, at the same time, the means of the vast mass of the population are more or less limited, a wise and judicious economy is one of the most valuable habits which can be formed and practised by those who see a family rising up around them, with daily-increasing wants, and whom they are naturally and laudably desirous of introducing into the busy scenes of the world with that education, and those capabilities, which appear most likely and best calculated to insure success.

So strong is the wish in the bosom of the parent to see his offspring prosperous and respected, and to save them, as much as may be, from those difficulties which beset his own path in his youthful career, that we must consider it as an innate propensity of our nature,

which, though often abused and carried to a most criminal excess, is yet planted in the bosom of man, by his all-gracious Creator, for the best and most salutary of purposes.

This feeling of anxiety for the well-being of our offspring, is, to a very considerable extent, manifested by both parents; but it more especially exhibits itself in the conduct and habits of the wife and mother. We have witnessed, with the most acute pain, the sacrifices willingly and cheerfully made by conjugal and maternal affection, in order that the husband and the child might be able to appear as she thought they ought among their connexions and associates; and we deem it the duty of all to do the utmost in their power to point out the means by which this proper and praiseworthy desire may be gratified, without incurring those serious privations which the effort for its accomplishment not unfrequently occasions.

Clothing is an item in the expenses of a family, especially if that family consists of a number of females, of no inconsiderable moment; and though the materials of dress are

at the present time exceedingly low, it must be borne in mind that the remuneration for most kinds of labor is also low, and that the cost of making up apparel nearly doubles that of the materials. That a knowledge of the most common principles of millinery and dress-making would be of essential service, both to young ladies and the maternal heads of families, no one, we presume, will venture to deny ; and that such knowledge is seldom acquired, is a fact equally beyond the verge of dispute. It is often felt that the means placed at her disposal by the husband's and the father's industry are inadequate, without much contrivance, to support the mother and daughters in that respectability of appearance they are, very properly, desirous of maintaining ; and those efforts to lessen expenditure are made which, for want of the necessary instruction, often end in aggravating the evils they were intended to diminish.

To all ladies thus situated this little handbook is respectfully presented ; and the author cherishes the hope that it will prove eminently useful in imparting those elementary principles

of information, upon confessedly-important subjects, which will enable the noble-minded females of the United States to secure many blessings of which they are at present deprived: to assume that respectability of appearance which their modest worth and home-virtues so well qualify them to adorn; and to enable them, with serenity and cheerfulness of mind, to cultivate those high moral faculties which are the glory of a nature made only "a little lower than the angels."

MILLINERY AND DRESS-MAKING.

CHAPTER I.

MILLINERY.

DIRECTIONS FOR BONNET-MAKING.

THAT there is a charm in a neat and well-made bonnet, is a fact that no one will be disposed to deny, because all feel it; and it appears almost like an instinct of our nature to desire that the head-dresses of those forms of loveliness which move around us, and whose sweet smiles constitute the sunshine of our lives, should be worthy of the fair faces they are intended to adorn. Fashion is ever changing, so that to lay down invariable rules for any portions, and especially those which may be considered the ornamental ones, of female attire, is altogether impossible: still the general principles are invariable, and the alterations demanded by the fickle goddess who presides

over the ladies' wardrobe exhibits her power, not so much in the alterations of general costume as in an ever-varying attention to details; so that of most articles of dress it may be said, "Ever varying, still the same."*

It is, then, essential that all to whom time and economy of expense are of any value, should be well grounded in those general principles which regulate the preparation of the various articles of dress; and those who are so grounded will find little difficulty in adapting such general knowledge to any particular details which the changes of fashion may render it advisable to adopt.

Millinery embraces the preparation of bonnets, caps, collars, and some other articles. We shall treat of these matters as clearly and concisely as possible, and hope that our labors will be found highly conducive to the interests and convenience of those we are especially desirous of instructing.

We commence with bonnet-making. The

* The latest fashions can always be seen, however, at Mrs. DEUEL'S, 297 Broadway,—a lady of taste and judgment, who stands at the head of her profession.

first thing to be attended to is to have all the materials ready before the work is commenced, otherwise much confusion and loss of time will be the consequence. Next, it will be necessary, in making up these articles, to use as much despatch as is compatible with accuracy and neatness. The materials employed are in general of a light and delicate-colored fabric; and leaving them to be tumbled and crushed in a work-basket, or on a table, is one effectual way to get them so spoiled as to render them unfit for use. On the other hand, care must be taken not to make more haste than good speed. Though it is necessary to use despatch in making up a bonnet, it is equally necessary that the utmost care and neatness should appear in every part. If the work is so done as to make some contrivance indispensable in order to hide an ill-finished corner, and other parts which require the utmost correctness, the whole will appear vulgar and slovenly, and will at once evince either culpable ignorance or carelessness in the maker.

Much diversity of opinion exists as to the colors most to be preferred for bonnets. For

young persons, bonnets look well made of shaded silks; but for adults, silks of a light and undecided color are, we think, most elegant. No doubt, in the choice both of material and of color, considerable deference must be paid to the prevailing fashion. It is well to avoid the two extremes into which some people are very apt to fall. The one is an entire disregard to the prevailing taste, and the other a servile submission to its tyrannic sway. A medium course is the only sensible one, and, in this, good sense will dictate how far to go and where to stop.

Amid the variety of shapes for bonnets, the straight cottage form may, in our opinion, claim the pre-eminence: they will always, more or less, be fashionable, being general favorites. Drawn bonnets have been much worn, and are not likely to be soon out of favor; they are well adapted for summer, and have an exceedingly neat appearance if proper pains are taken in the construction of them; they have also another advantage—they may be made of almost any material, and look well either in silk or satin. Net is also employed for the same

purpose, and made either of white or colored muslin ; they look extremely pretty. We hope the following directions will enable any young lady to make her own.

If the bonnet is a full-sized one, and is made of muslin the width of common print, the required quantity is one yard and a quarter ; and if the material be silk or satin, two yards will be found necessary. The canes are bought ready prepared, or you may use whalebone for the slots if you prefer it : it has one advantage, that is, it is not so liable to break as the canes are ; of course it is much dearer. Having got all the requisite articles, you proceed to make the bonnet as follows : First, make a foundation, either of willow or pasteboard, the shape you design the article to assume when finished, and you may make the crown and front of the bonnet all in one, or in separate pieces, whichever you think best. We shall first give directions for making a drawn bonnet, with the front and crown in one. This method is thus executed : It may be proper to premise, that in making a drawn bonnet with the crown and front in one piece, you find yourself obliged to

join a piece of the material to the crown as neatly as possible, as neither silk nor satin is of a sufficient width, unless the bonnet be very small. You are first to take one yard and a quarter of the silk, and doubling it lengthwise, round off the corners by the pattern previously made ; then slit the silk down the middle, and run it together at the outer edge. Then turn it so as to have the running on the inside. Next make the places to receive the canes. You are to make four or five of these runners close to the edge, all round, in order to give it sufficient strength, and just wide enough to admit the canes. Above these the other runners are to be made about half an inch distant from each other, and with a small hole to admit the canes ; when the latter have been put in, these holes are to be sewed up. The runners are to be made with sewing silk, which is not to be cut off, but left, as by its means you can the more easily draw the bonnet to the proper shape. Continue these runners until you have completed the whole front, and then proceed to make the crown thus : Make runners the same distance as in the front, and the

same number close at the top as you made in the edge. Having finished all the runners, measure the proper length of the canes by the pattern, cut them off, and insert them ; you must also insert a wire of sufficient strength in the place of the second cane from the edge. You are then to draw up the silk both of the front and the crown to its proper size, by means of the silk ends you left to the runners, and fasten them as neatly and securely as possible. What is called the head-lining, is a piece of silk or muslin, neatly hemmed, and of the same depth as the crown, which having inserted, you cut the curtain from the silk, three quarters of a yard in length, and half a quarter deep ; this curtain is to be finished by a narrow slip cut on the cross, sewn on to it, turned over, and hemmed neatly down on the under side. The curtain is cut crosswise of the silk. In preference to the narrow slip, some persons put a cord round the edge of the curtain, which must have a runner and cane at the top, on which you draw it to the size required. The bonnet is now complete, and can be trimmed as taste and fancy may direct.

Another method of making this kind of bonnets is to have the front and crown separate. In this case, the front is made in the same manner as in the former example in all respects. The same length of material is required, which is to be doubled and cut in the same manner. For the crown you make a foundation of willow or stiff muslin, and you must so make the round patch at the top as that it will stand half an inch above the edge. This top piece is to be covered with plain silk; and before you cover the sides of the crown you must sew it on to the front; you need not have the crown double silk, as an inferior material for the lining is quite sufficient. You make runners for the crown, and prepare the curtain as before directed.

Bonnets of this kind, when formed all in one piece, are best made of muslin or of net, and they are especially light and agreeable in the sultry days of summer.

Bonnets of various shapes are made of plain and figured silk or satin, and must in all cases be formed upon a stiff foundation. The best and most economical way is to purchase a

foundation of the shape required, which is to be found in the different millinery establishments. Having procured one to your mind, proceed as follows : Detach the crown from the front, and shape the material by the pattern, tack the lining and the outside to the front and cord, or otherwise secure the edges. Then make the crown, covering the top first ; then put on it the piece of the material that is to go round, in a proper manner, and secure it at the top by a single or double row of cord, fit it as tightly as possible to the frame you had before prepared, and fasten it on at the back. You then turn in the edges and set it on to the front. The edge of the crown is to be outermost, or over that of the front. You put in the head lining and attach the curtain as in the former examples, and trim it as you choose.

Bonnets for children are, for the most part, made in the same manner, and of the same materials.

An acquaintance with the directions here given will soon enable any one to make a bonnet of almost any shape. The principles are the same in all, and details can not be learned

from books—they can only be the result of observation and experience.

Mourning bonnets are made of black silk and trimmed with crape, or, if for deep mourning, covered with crape. In trimming mourning bonnets, the crape bow and strings are generally broad hemmed, the double hem being from half an inch to one inch broad. For very deep mourning, the front of the bonnet has a fall or veiling of crape, half a yard deep and a yard and a half long, having a broad hem at the lower edge. The upper edge, being drawn up to the size of the front, is either inserted between the covering and the lining, or is set in along the upper edge and covered with a fold of crape.

DIRECTIONS IN CAP-MAKING.

The next branch of millinery to which we shall direct attention is that of cap-making. Some attempts have been made recently to discard the use of night-caps, as detrimental to health; but it is not likely that such old friends will be speedily abandoned at the dictum of new and untried theories. We give the two

following examples as among the best we know; of course the variety of shapes is almost beyond calculation.

NIGHT CAPS.—The first is made as follows:



The head-piece is made of one piece of thick muslin, and the crown, which is in the shape of a horse-shoe, of another. You must be careful to have both quite large enough to admit of the cap being

drawn up to the size required, which is done either by a strong thread or fine bobbin, run into the slots indicated in the accompanying engraving. Having drawn up both parts to the proper size for the head, you unite them with a cord run in between them, and overcast the raw edges on the inside. You sew the front and ends into a narrow band of muslin made double: then finish by setting on the border and strings, as shown in the pattern.

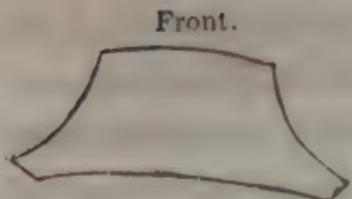
The next example we shall give may be either made entirely of muslin, or of muslin and lace. The cap itself is made of muslin,

and drawn to the proper size of the head by means of slots, as in the last pattern. The crown is gathered full at the head-piece. The trimmings may be either entirely of muslin, or they may be set with lace at the edge ; in either case, they must be first whipped, and then set on to the cap full. You must be careful not to hold the lace edging too tight while setting it on. These are very elegant night caps, and the details may be varied at pleasure.

DAY CAPS are worn by most married ladies, and by some that are still single. They are of a great variety of shapes, and almost all kinds of material, but especially lace, and plain or figured net ; both white, colored, and black, are used in the making of them. To insure accuracy and prevent waste, it is always advisable to cut the patterns in paper. The following may be made either in white or colored net, and looks extremely well :

First pattern : Make a head-piece or front of the annexed shape, cutting it by a paper





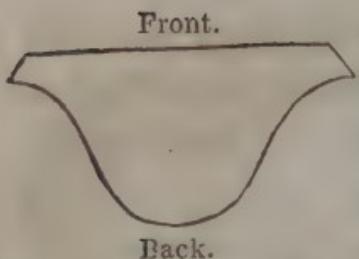
Front.



Crown.

pattern the size required; then in a similar manner cut the crown, which is in the shape of a large horseshoe. The double head-piece is short at the back, but long at the ears, and you will require half a yard of net, of the ordinary width, to make one cap. You cut out the head-piece first, and put the kind of wire called riband-wire all round it; you then set the crown in plain at the top, and the fulness plaited in neatly at the bottom: the width must not exceed two inches. This cap is trimmed with riband, one piece of which is to be placed across the cap where the crown and the head-piece meet. For the border you will require from three to four yards either of net or lace, which having plaited, you set on full at the sides, and quite plain in the centre. The border at the back is set on full, and you have strings of riband. Some ladies wear an artificial flower, or flowers, which gives to the cap an elegant and appropriate finish.

Second pattern: This is made of one piece



of net, which is cut as shown in the accompanying figure. It is the most easy to make of any shape we know. The ears are formed by the corners ; the front is formed and kept in shape by a riband-wire ; and the crown is made by plaiting in the back. It may be trimmed and bordered as in the first pattern.

DRESS CAP.--This is made of net, and is formed of two pieces, exclusively of the border and trimmings. The pattern must be cut in paper both for the head-pieces and the crown. The head-piece is, when opened, twelve and a half nails long, and two wide. The paper pattern is only a half one, and the material is to be doubled before cutting it. You cut from the front in a slant line, commencing at the point of the double, and reducing the open ends half a nail ; you also slit from the back at the bottom, one nail and a half in depth, leaving the extremities only an obtuse point. The crown is in length four



nails and three quarters, and five nails wide. You cut off from the top, having previously doubled it half a nail, sloping it round at the corners: the bottom corners are done in a similar manner. Make the cap up by first putting wire round the head-piece, and then, having previously whipped the crown, setting it on plain for about two nails above the ears, and the remainder in small plaits, quite to the front. The back is also plaited a little to make it fit properly to the head; and in cutting the slants for the head-piece, you must do it in the shape of a quarter of a circle. The cap is bordered with blonde, or lace set on full, and a small bow is put on at the back. Over the front a riband, either white or colored, is brought, which is left of sufficient length to form the strings.

If you would have this cap more ornamental, take two pieces of wire, a little shorter than the front, and quill them with the same kind of blonde, or lace, as that of which the border is made, but narrower than the border, and not so full. The wires are to be covered with a narrow riband, and one of them is set on at

the joining of the crown and head-piece, and the other between it and the border.

A BONNET CAP.—This is made of net, and is neat and convenient. You commence by taking a square of seven nails, which you double, and the back is hollowed out a little. You then hem the front and the back, and join it up at the top with a piece of lace, satin, or riband, about one nail in length; the rest of the top is whipped and gathered to the point of the insertion work. The border is of blonde, net, or lace, and is set on full and double at the sides, single and plain in front. A simple flower placed between the double border on each side, is a neat and tasteful addition.

A HELMET CAP.—This is made up for a morning dress, and is easily done. The usual material is tulle, or lisso. It is in three parts, and is made as follows. The pattern for the sides must be four nails long, and two nails and three quarters broad. The front is a little sloped, and the back is curved from the ears about half a nail. This curve must be two



nails in depth from the front, and you slope upward from this point two nails and a half; leave half a nail straight, and round off the corners at the top to one nail and a quarter; the rest is left straight. Having thus cut the side pieces, you must take a strip of the net, three quarters of a yard long and two nails broad, in front, gradually decreasing to one nail and a quarter; behind this you must gather evenly on both sides, and set on to the other pieces full all the way. The cap will then

resemble the accompanying figure. You wire both the front and the back, and bind them with riband. The stitches are to be concealed by a riband or rouleon of satin, and you trim the cap as fancy or good taste may dictate.



WIDOW'S CAP.—The making of this requires care. The material is white crape or book muslin. The pattern must be cut in paper, which is to be laid on the material. The latter, of course, must be doubled.

The paper for the crown is the full length, but only half the width required. Get a piece of paper seven and a half nails long, and three and a half nails wide. This you slope on one side ; and commencing from the double, you measure two nails and three quarters, and then proceed in a line slightly curved upward, for three nails and three quarters, from which you round off the corner two nails and a half, leaving one nail straight at the top. For the half head-piece, your paper must be one nail and a quarter in width, and three nails and three quarters in length. The ends of this are sloped from the corner on one side, so as to reduce the other three quarters of a nail. The cap is made up by setting the crown into the head-piece, the shortest side of which joins it, and you must be sure to throw most of the fulness to the front ; then hem it both before and behind, and set on the borders, which are made of the same material as the cap, and are one quarter of a nail broad. They are set on as full as possible, and are doubled in front. The borders are hemmed, and a round stick is run through, which gives them the appearance of

being crimped. A tape is put through each hem, by which it is drawn to its proper size and kept in its place. Binders are laid upon the head-piece, which are made in the following manner: You require a piece of the material two yards in length, and one nail and a half broad. In this you make a tuck, in the middle, and a broad hem on each side; through these the stick used for the border is put, and a tape is run in as before, and for the same purpose. These bands are fastened behind. The chin band is made nearly in the same manner. Both edges are hemmed and crimped with the stick, and are also furnished with a tape. The length is three quarters of a yard, and there is no plain piece left between the hems. These are pinned on each side of the ears of the cap.

A CAPOTTE.—This is often worn by young ladies who are liable to take cold. It is thus made: A piece of silk or satin riband is taken of the proper length for a cap front, and not quite two nails in breadth, which is reduced to half a nail, by the inser-



tion of a riband-wire at each edge. Cross pieces of wire in the middle and at each end are introduced, for the purpose of keeping the riband its full width. Another piece of wire, covered with riband, the same as the front, goes at the back of the head, the length of which must be made to fit the wearer, and care must be taken that it does so in as accurate a manner as possible, as almost all the comfort and ease of the capotte depend upon it. This is firmly sewed on to the front, a little above the ears. The border is of net, blonde, or tulle, and set on to the front in plaits; upon the edge a satin or gauze riband is laid in folds, so as to cover the stitches and form the strings. A similar one is laid upon the back, and sometimes a small bow is placed there in addition. You trim the border according to taste or the prevailing fashion.

LAPPETS.—These are made of net, lace, or blonde, set on, as a double border, to a riband, which forms the strings. They may be either plaited all round, or left plain in front. In the latter case, a plain piece of blonde is generally passed over the forehead.

COLLARS AND CAPES.—These are so numerous and various, both in their shapes and materials, that to give particular examples in a hand-book is impossible. The general principles in all are the same ; they are worn as a finish to the dress, and should be made to sit as neatly upon the neck and shoulders as possible. Velvet, silk, net, lace, and various kinds of muslin, are the materials employed ; they are made plain, and with worked edges, square-cornered, or in a semi-circular form, as best suits the taste of the wearer, and the purpose they are intended to answer. They are sometimes made with a small collar to turn down upon a larger one ; neat ones are made of clear muslin, with a border of braid laid on in various tasteful devices. The widow's collar is made of book-muslin, with a broad hem at the edge, and over this is placed black crape. The cuffs, generally from five to seven inches deep, are made the same way and of the same materials. Collars for slighter mourning are made of muslin, crape, or net.

TURBANS.—The foundation of a turban is usually made of slight buckram or stiff muslin,

cut so as to form a broad band for going round the head, with a peak or point to rise above the forehead. This band has a chip and thin wire at the upper and lower edges, and is lined with persian or sarcenet. The material of which the turban is made (being crape, tulle, or gauze—frequently a gauze handkerchief) is then pinned on according to your pattern or your taste, with a few occasional stitches. As turbans are rarely trimmed, they should be neatly put together in every part. On all sides they should be finished so as to bear the eye.

To make a turban in the Turkish style, two lengths of gauze, perhaps two gauze scarfs, are twisted, one over the other, round the foundation. A piece of the gauze is left over to cover the crown, and the ornamented ends hang down on one side.

CHAPTER II.

DRESSMAKING.

INSTRUCTIONS IN CUTTING OUT A DRESS.

IN many instances, to be able to cut out and make up a dress is an acquisition of no small advantage to its possessor. This useful branch of female education is not, in our opinion, cultivated with that care its importance demands ; and, in consequence, much expense is often incurred where the money might be applied to other important and necessary purposes. Some people have an idea that they can cut out a gown or other dress merely by looking at one already made, or by an inspection of the drawings, and in most cases very deficient descriptions, found in books of the fashions : but this is a sad mistake. No great exertions are necessary in order to become capable of practising this part of domestic economy ; but still its principles must be understood, and its most simple rules impressed on the memory, before

anything like accuracy, to say nothing of proficiency, can be attained.

No one will deny the importance of dress; it is, in fact, an index to the character; and the female who is utterly regardless of her appearance, may be safely pronounced deficient in some of the more important qualities which the term "good character" invariably implies. On the other hand, a regard to neatness and order, held in due subordination to the exercise of the nobler faculties, will generally be found to stand in close connexion with an earnest endeavor after the attainment of intellectual and moral excellence. Thus, an attention to neatness in dress, and to its judicious arrangement, so as to be in accordance with the station and circumstances of the wearer, becomes of much more moment than, on a superficial view of the subject, some might be disposed to admit.

Most girls begin dressmaking very early; that is to say, when they clothe their dolls: and very good practice it is. When their mother gives them a remnant of print, and they turn it about, and measure it to ascertain whether there is enough for a frock, and if

there is not enough for a frock, determine whether it shall be a petticoat or a pinafore, and cut it out accordingly,—all this is practice in dressmaking. When the doll is bidden to lie very still to be fitted, and when she is laid sometimes on her face, sometimes on her back, and sometimes held with her head downward, while a paper pattern of her waist is being cut,—all this is practice in dressmaking. The practice will be all the better if the mother can spare a minute to look on, and point out that the front of the body may, if convenient, be cut on the cross, but that the backs and arm-pieces must be straightwise of the cotton ; and if she can just show how far back the join of the sleeve should go, and how the skirt should be a little taken up in front, that it may sit well, and not hang lower before than behind. It will be kind in the mother, too, not to allow bad work in a doll's dress, any more than in her own gowns. If you have had a mother or a schoolmistress who let you dress a doll, and made you do it neatly, you have had as good an introduction to your future business as you could desire.

From making your doll's frocks, your next step was, probably, to make your own. Your first attempt, perhaps, was to run the seams of the skirt of your cotton frock,—to run the selvage seams with a backstitch, and, in case of a gore or half-breadth, to make a hem with the selvage over the cut edge. If you puckered it in the least, I hope you were made to take it out and do it again, taking care to pin the edges together at short distances the whole length, that you might not find, when you came to the bottom, that one breadth gave you an inch or two over the other. Some few things about making a skirt should have been explained to you at the beginning—things which are true about the making of all skirts, through every change of fashion, and whether the dress be of the coarsest stuff or the richest satin. These are—

1st. That you should pin or tack together the breadths of the skirt at the top, before you begin, so that you may not chance to put in more gores on one side than the other (if there are gores), or find that the hind-breadth comes to one side.

2dly. That you should, while thus arranging the breadths, look very carefully that no one breadth is turned wrongside out, if there are two sides; or, if figured, with the pattern upside down.

3dly. That, as the uppermost edge takes up the most, as your work lies over your finger, and as the cut edge stretches more than the selvage, you should, as beforementioned, pin from top to bottom, before you begin to join them, the breadths on which you are employed. This is the surest way of avoiding puckering.

4thly. That you should, as often as possible, begin your run at the top, so that if there is any left over, it may go off at the bottom, where it is of the least consequence. You can do this in every case but where you have to join a cut edge and a selvage, and must begin at the bottom, in order to have the selvage uppermost.

5thly. That you must remember that gored skirts hang lower at the bottom of the gores than either before or behind, and that the first turning in of the hem should be therefore laid in rather deeper at the sides of the skirt.

6thly. That you should make your fastenings so good as that the dress may wear out before they give way. This is particularly important with regard to the pocket-holes and the openings behind, which should be well secured by stitching, or a bar at the turn. It is very trying to a lady to find her skirt slit down behind the first time she slips her gown over her head, or her pocket-hole give way before she has put her hand into it half a dozen times.

With these remarks, and a proper share of attention, the following instructions will remove much of the difficulty in which the novice in the art of dressmaking finds herself involved.

First the materials for the intended dress must be procured, and it is advisable, whenever practicable, to get them all at the same time. The necessary requisites are the material, the lining for the body and skirt, wadding, covering, hooks and eyes, silk, thread, and what is called stiffening muslin. You will require all those for a silk dress, and most of them for those of other fabrics.

Having thus procured the required articles, proceed to cut out the dress, first measuring

off the number of breadths of the proper length for the skirt (which is, of course, to be regulated by the height of the wearer, and by the manner in which it is intended to be made), and try them carefully on one side. If tucks are to be introduced into the skirt, a proper allowance must be made for these, as also for the turnings both at top and bottom. You next cut out the sleeves, as being the largest parts of the garment except the skirt. In cutting out the sleeves, you must first prepare a paper pattern of the required shape ; then double the lining, and cut it exactly the shape of the paper, leaving about an inch all round for the turnings in. You will thus cut the sleeve linings both together, and will avoid some labor and all danger of making one larger than the other. Double the silk or other material so as that both the wrong sides may face each other, and cut the sleeves by the lining just prepared. To secure exactness, it is best to tack it to the material. Be careful to lay the straight side of the pattern to the selvage of the silk.

The sleeves being thus prepared, proceed to take the proper measures for the front and back

of the body, by fitting a paper pattern to the shape of the person for whom the dress is intended. The paper should be thin, and you commence by folding down the corner the length of the front, and pinning it to the middle of the stay-bone. Then spread the paper as smoothly as possible along the bosom to the shoulder, and fold it in a plait, so as to fit the shape exactly, and bring the paper under the arm, making it retain its position by a pin; from this point you cut it off downward under the arm, and along the waist; the paper is then to be rounded for the arm-hole and the shoulder, and you must recollect to leave it large enough to admit of the turnings. In the same manner you proceed to form the back, pinning the paper down straightly; and leaving sufficient for the hem, you fit it to the shoulder and under the arm, so as to meet the front. You will thus have an exact pattern of half of the body, and this is all that is necessary, as, of course, you cut both sides, both of the front and back, at the same time. The linings are to be cut by the pattern, and the silk by the linings. You must take care to cut the

front crosswise of the silk, and in two separate pieces, which are afterward joined in the middle. If the plait made in the pattern be very large, it must be cut out on the silk, or the body will not fit well to the shape ; if small, it may be left : but we think that, in all cases, to cut it out is the preferable method.

It is not generally advisable to cut out the half of the back all in one piece, as it fits better with pieces joined at the sides ; these are called side-bodies ; and this method should always be adopted, unless the lady has a very flat back : in that case, it is best to cut the half all in one piece. The backs must be cut straight ; and it is best to tack the material to the lining before cutting it.

Having thus prepared the several parts, begin to make the garment, by running or seam-ing the breadths of the skirt together ; and be sure that it is made full : a narrow or straight skirt is now completely, and very properly, exploded. Run the seams as evenly as pos-sible, fastening the ends to your knee, or to a pincushion screwed to the work-table, to hold them firmly. Run the lining together in a

similar manner, and fasten each of the outside seams to a corresponding one in it; after which turn the edges at the top down on the inside, and sew them firmly together. Between the lining and the silk it is usual to introduce some kind of material, as stiffened muslin or wadding, to hold the bottom of the dress in its proper place. This is fastened to the lining, and the silk is hemmed down upon it. Care must be taken that no stitches appear on the right side. An opening in one of the seams must be left for the pocket-hole, which must not exceed one quarter of a yard in length. You run the silk and the lining together, as at the top, and make a plait which is to be folded over on the right side; this is secured at the bottom, and conceals the opening. Having thus completed the skirt, to which flounces may be added, or into which tucks may be introduced, if deemed advisable (they seldom are in silk dresses), you proceed to make the sleeves, running up a cord on one side of the silk or other material, and folding both the silk and the lining the same way, you stitch them together, and leave an opening at the wrist;

you then turn the sleeve, and the edges being on the inside are not seen. The sleeve being thus seamed up, it is, if full, to be gathered, or done in small plaits at the bottom, to the size of the wrist. The gathers, or plaits, are set into a narrow band, lined, and you cord as you please, or as is most in accordance with the prevailing fashion. You next put on the trimmings at the top of the sleeve, and then set it into the arm-hole with small plaits. Some put on the trimmings after the sleeve has been set on to the body; but it is a most incorrect and inconvenient practice.

The next thing to be done is to put the several parts of the body or waist together. This should be done slightly, and the body tried on, in order that the fit may be made as perfect as possible. When this is done, sew the parts firmly together, and put a cord over all the joinings except those under the arms. Fasten the plaits down on the fronts, hem the parts which require it, cut the proper shape round the neck, and see that the arm-holes are so made as to be easy and agreeable. Then hem the back, stitch the dress up the front as firmly as you

can, and do the same at the shoulders, the side-bodies, and under the arms ; after which you must put a cord or band at the waist, and also insert a cord round the neck. This cording of the neck and waist require much care and attention ; for if not done properly, the appearance of the dress will be spoiled. In case you prefer a band to a cord at the waist, it must be lined, and the lining put on first, and afterward covered with the material of which the dress is composed. If there be any trimming on the body, it must be put on before the sleeves are set in. A cord is to be set round the arm-holes as neatly as possible.

The body being now finished, you have only to set it on to the skirt, which is to be doubled more in front than at the back, in order to form the slope. You gather the part not plaited, and join it to the body. In setting on the back, it is best not to gather it, but to fold each gather as you proceed : this secures an evenness not otherwise easily to be obtained. The depth of the slope varies, and no certain rule can be given, except that in all cases the skirt must be a little shorter before than behind ;

otherwise much inconvenience will be found in walking, especially where it is the fashion to wear the dress of a considerable length.

It is often deemed desirable to have a cape to the dress of the same material. This is often found to be a great convenience; and no great art, though a proper degree of attention, is required in making it. The lining is to be tacked to the silk or stuff, and the cape cut out by a paper pattern the size and shape required. Before taking out the tacking thread, a cord should be run in at the edges, and these latter are to be turned, and the lining sewed down firmly upon them. You now take out the thread, and ornament or leave the cape plain, just as you please. In making flounces, you must remember that they must in all cases be cut on the cross, otherwise they will not hang with that degree of exactness and freedom which is desirable. They are to be run on a cord at the top, the size of the skirt, and gathered. They should also be corded at the lower edges. Sometimes a slot is made at the top of the flounce, and the cord run in. This is much to be preferred to the common method.

Tucks, with or without open work between them, have an exceedingly neat appearance, and never look out of fashion. They are especially proper in black and white dresses ; and when they are put on, it is essential that they should be cut straightwise of the material. To cut them crosswise is decidedly improper. It is sometimes good economy to make the sleeves of a dress in two separate parts each, so that the lower portion can be taken off at pleasure. For an evening dress this is found very convenient, as the under part will come off at the elbow, and a ruffle of lace can be substituted in its place, which gives a short sleeve a neat and finished appearance.

The directions here given apply principally to dresses made of stuff or silk. In those made of muslin or calico some slight variations occur. These latter are not always lined ; indeed, cotton prints for summer wear are seldom done so ; but the lining of muslin dresses is becoming much more common than it was some years since, experience having shown that the dress when lined through sits much neater upon the person than it does without.

In cases where linings are omitted, a piece of some strong material must be run in at the bottom of the skirt, and firmly held down with the hem. But we think a thin lining, even for the light dresses worn in summer, is to be preferred. It is a good plan to set a cord round the bottoms of dresses ; they soon wear, but the cord is a great advantage, as when it gets unsightly, a new one can with little trouble be put in its place, and the dress remains the same length as before.

If proper attention be paid to these directions, any lady may soon learn to make her own dresses ; to do which would be, in a variety of instances, a decided advantage. Where there is a family of children, the mother finds that if she has to have all their dresses made by hired hands, it will most materially increase the expenses incurred for clothing ; and to avoid this, she does them herself, without the requisite experience : the chance is that she wastes more in one way than she saves in the other, and the garments are illy fitted in the bargain.

In making children's dresses, many of the directions already given will be found equally

applicable. Frocks for both boys and girls are generally made with the bodies full, but the pattern must be cut plain in paper, the same as in the garments intended for persons of more mature age. The bodies of children's frocks are often made without linings, but, as a general rule, we think the practice is exceptionable. The clothing of young persons should always be made so as to support the frame, without cramping its growth, or impeding its muscular action by unnecessary and injudicious pressure. The skirts of frocks intended for little boys are often cut crosswise, and look pretty and becoming. In dresses made of figured silk, or muslin, or cotton prints (for children), the tucks should always be cut crosswise. This is especially to be attended to in plaid patterns.

Frocks for girls are by some persons directed to be made to come high up to the neck. This is, in our opinion, a practice that should be avoided. The body, on the contrary, should be rather low, and made to lie firmly upon the projecting part of the shoulder, but not to fall off upon the upper arm: this is almost as un-

sightly as the high body we disapprove of. The graceful form of the bust, one of the most exquisite productions of creative skill, should by no means be concealed ; a necklace is its proper adornment ; and should it be said that the clothing them up to the neck is necessary on the score of health, nothing can be farther from the truth. In fact, a moderate exposure to the action of the sun and air is essential to the possession of good health. The notion that to cover up the neck and bosom of a little girl will prevent her taking cold, is ridiculous in the extreme. It is the most likely way we know of, of securing the evil it is intended to avoid. A holland or diaper pinafore, made to come up to the throat, and put on at times of unusual exposure to the cold, would answer every desirable end. We hope that all mothers, who may read our observations, will at once abandon the idea of high-bodied frocks being in any way conducive to the health or comfort of their female children.

MANTELET.—In the making of this useful and favorite article of ladies' attire, there is much variety in the materials employed. They

are sometimes made of shawling, but more commonly of silk, satin, cloth, velvet, and merino. The mantelet comes down nearly to the knee, and is lined either with silk or muslin, and occasionally with glazed cotton cloth. The shape is that of the cape of a cloak, and should be cut by a pattern to insure accuracy ; five breadths of the material will be required, and the neck is hollowed to make it fit comfortably ; it can be either gathered into a band or set on to a collar. In the latter case, the collar must be made to turn over. You trim the mantelet in any manner you think the most becoming, with velvet, satin, or fur ; or it may be trimmed with either fringe or lace. It is neat, and very convenient for a lady, either for a short walk, or as a part of a summer's evening dress ; in the latter case, the material and lining should be as light as possible.

LADIES' SILK CLOAK.—Choose a silk that is of a color not liable to fade, of which six breadths are required, and the width of the cloak is five breadths ; the length is, of course, made according to the height of the person who is to wear it. You cut the shoulder pieces

first in paper, taking a cloak already made for your guide, and having fitted them exactly to the person, lay the paper upon the lining, and cut it out ; the silk is cut out by the lining ; and be careful to leave sufficient for the turnings in. Prepare the collar in the same way, pointed at the corners and slanting toward the neck ; the collar is hollowed out at the top from the front corners, to a sufficient depth behind, to insure its falling gracefully over the shoulders and back. It is lined with silk, between which and the outside stiff muslin is to be introduced. The shoulder pieces are to have flannel or wadding between the silk lining and the material. Those who have no cloak at hand from which to take a pattern for the shoulder pieces, may obtain one by the following simple method : Take a piece of thin paper, and cut it in the shape of a round collar ; hollow it out at the top, until it will lie over the shoulders perfectly straight and close.

The various parts being thus ready, proceed to make up the cloak. First the breadths are to be seamed together, so as to show the stitches as little as may be. One breadth is to

be thrown to the back, and at one nail and a half from the seam cut the arm-holes three and a quarter nails long, and two and a quarter below the shoulder pieces, which are to be next made by running the material and the lining together, with the wadding between them, on the wrong side, and then turning them. You next double the three back breadths, and hollow them so as to fit the shoulder pieces ; into which the whole is afterward to be set in as full and even as possible, the two front breadths reaching to the shoulder, and all the rest being set on to the back. At the distance of four nails from the shoulder pieces, plait in the back so as to fit the waist ; and a band, of a sufficient length to encircle the person, is laid upon the folds behind, and drawn to the inside through two apertures cut on each side, and worked as button-holes ; this band is fastened by buttons or hooks in front. Sometimes a riband-case is made on the inside, and strings run through it, which answers the same end. You next make the collar in the same manner as you prepared the shoulder-pieces, and set it on to the neck. These cloaks are

trimmed in various ways. The arm-holes, when not in use, are concealed by pieces of the silk, three and a quarter nails in length, and half a nail in breadth, which are lined and set on to one side. They must have a row of piping set on all round. You may trim the fronts with a hem, one nail and three quarters deep, of velvet, cut crosswise ; or, if you prefer it, you can substitute an edging of fur : but we think that velvet looks the most handsome and becoming. The cloak is sewed round the neck with silk cord of the same color, and finished with tassels, or an ornamental clasp is adopted ; either is suitable, and may be used at pleasure.

These cloaks are very elegant, when properly made. Sometimes they are furnished with capes of the same material, which are generally loose, and are found very convenient. They may be worn as mantelets, without the cloak, and are made as follows :

Take a sheet of paper as large as you intend half the cape to be, and round off the corners so as to form it into a perfect circle ; double this, and from the straight side cut a

small half round for the neck: open the pattern, and from the front of the inner half circle double one side in a slanting direction, for the opening in front. No precise rule can be given; but the paper must be so fitted to the person that the fronts may meet when the cape is worn. Having got your pattern correct, cut out the lining by it, and lastly the silk for the cape; both, but especially the outside, must be cut crosswise. The lining and silk are to be neatly run together and then turned, and the back seam seamed up. The trimming of the cape must be the same as that of the cloak.

CARRIAGE CLOAK.—For persons who have to travel in cold seasons or in open carriages, these cloaks afford a degree of warmth and comfort not to be despised or disregarded. The material is either plaid or some woollen fabric, and the manner of making a cloak of this description is as follows: The material should be eleven nails in width, and the general length of the cloak is one yard and a half. Of this, five breadths are sufficient for the width of the skirt. The arm-holes are made at the distance of five nails from the top, and

are five nails in length. This cloak is furnished with sleeves, which are sewn almost plain into the arm-holes, and may be made use of or not, as is deemed most convenient. They are made of squares of the material, eight nails by eight, so that when doubled and sewn up they are eight nails long and four in width. The cloak is gathered at the neck into a band the proper width, and a collar is added, as are also one or more capes. The length of the neck-band varies, but its medium length is ten nails. This kind of cloak is lined throughout with calamanca, glazed cotton cloth, or flannel; and it is a wrapper, without which no delicate female should presume to travel in our uncertain climate. A neat button, clasp, or chain, secures it at the throat.

GARDEN CLOAK.—This is a useful article, and is generally made of plaid or merino. Three breadths of the latter, of what is called double width, will be sufficient for the cloak; of the former you will require five breadths. You cut the shoulder-pieces and the collar as before directed, and the arm-holes are made in the same position as those in a silk cloak;

they are three nails and a half from the lower part of the shoulder piece, and four nails in length. They are concealed by pieces lined and piped, as those for a silk cloak. The whole of the garment is lined with glazed cotton cloth, either of black or of any other color that is deemed suitable, and fastened at the neck by a hook or clasp.

A BOY'S CAPE OR CLOAK.—This may be made of Scotch plaid or any other suitable material. You cut an entire circle, as large as you design the cloak to be ; in the centre of this, cut a small aperture, about twice the size of that required for the neck, and cut thence to the edge on one side ; this makes the opening for the front. Gather the neck into a band, hem the fronts on the outer edge, and the cloak is complete.

PIPING.—This is often used as an ornament or finish to silk cloaks or other dresses. It is made in the following manner : enclose a cord of the proper thickness in a strip of silk cut crosswise, and put in on in the most even manner possible.

As plaiting and making tucks are much used

in dress-making, we close with directions concerning them.

In plaiting, make the plaits as even as possible ; and in double plaiting, they must be laid both ways, and made to meet in the middle.

Tucks require to be made even, and it is a good plan to run them by a card cut the proper width. They must be run on with small and regular stitches, and a backstitch must be taken constantly as you proceed.

CHAPTER III.

CONCLUSION.

IN the foregoing pages, we have embodied, in a concise but intelligible form, a mass of information, which experience and observation have convinced us was much needed by thousands and tens of thousands of those who are the glory of the land that gave them birth, and who, amid their scanty and limited means, are most laudably ambitious to appear, in the truest sense of the word, respectable. To those, and to the affectionate mothers and devoted wives, who are anxious to make the most of the means placed at their disposal, we trust that our labor, and it has been truly a "labor of love," will prove an acceptable offering. Already we behold, in mental vision, many a delighted mother and daughter, conning over the lessons of useful economy we have thus endeavored to impart, and rejoicing that at least one pen has been devoted to aiding the but half-informed in the more economical out-

lays of the proceeds of industry, and the bringing within the sacred precincts of domestic life a new rivulet of prosperity and happiness.

In whatever light we view it, the needle is an object of the most fascinating character. It is a home friend ; and while it confers upon us all unnumbered blessings, it is a source both of utility and pleasure, that is within the reach of all. In joy and in sorrow, in health and in sickness, in life and in death, it is our companion, our solace, and our helper. Thus, ever ready to obey our guiding will, let us be sure to profit by its silent but eloquent instructions. As the needle turns not to the right hand or the left from the occupation assigned, so let us pursue, with undeviating footsteps, the appointed path of duty ; and as it ever points with strict fidelity to the attracting magnet, so let us in all our works, whether useful or ornamental, turn to HIM “in whom we live, and move, and have our being.”

There is something calculated to afford high delight to the heart which expands at the prospect of any increase in the sum of human happiness, in the fact that, since the com-

mencement of the present century, much more attention has been paid to the subject of dress, by the mass of society, than had been previously bestowed upon it. This is one of the most favorable signs of the times, since it is closely, and in some respects inseparably, connected with the elevation of the mental standard, and the development of those higher powers by which human nature is so prominently distinguished above the animal creation. No one who has paid the least attention to the subject can doubt, for a moment, the close alliance which subsists between the honest pride of appearance and the desire to secure the highest attainable amount of intellectual culture and improvement; and no one really possessing a heart can refuse to rejoice in this undeniable mark of general progression. We are sensible, that if not under proper guidance, this desire to attain a more respectable and elevated position in society may degenerate into a mere love of show and finery. But we are disposed to look on the bright side of things, and to come to the conclusion that elements are now at work which will produce not only

a refined and elevated taste, but a correct and well-regulated judgment. We consider it the peculiar glory of our age, that woman is acknowledged to be fully capable of, and worthy to share in, the most exalted intellectual pursuits. To her, as well as to the boasted lords of the creation, the treasures of art are freely opened; and she is invited in the society of those most loved, to walk through the glorious paths of knowledge, and to drink with them full draughts from the opened fountains of enlarged information.

To render herself worthy of this her improved and still improving condition, is the duty, and should be the pride, of every female. And when it is considered how much a neat and becoming mode of attire adds to the attractive force of woman's charms, it will be at once seen, that to attain that object with the least unnecessary sacrifice of time, labor, and expense, is a matter of no mean consideration; and that any effort tending to this end, however humble, is deserving of the countenance and encouragement of all who are desirous of co-operating in the designs of the benevolent

Creator, and who, recollecting that He himself has declared that “it is not good for man to be alone,” are desirous of investing the fair forms of those intended for our comfort and delight with every personal and mental excellence, calculated to render them worthy of the highest esteem and most devoted affection of the wise, good, and accomplished among mankind.

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